



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

A NEW VOLUNTEER SYSTEM¹

HERBERT QUICK

Member U. S. Farm Land Loan Board.

THE United States, facing as it does the necessity of an augmented army, would seem compelled to depend on one of two ways of securing men: by conscription or by the volunteer system.

Conscription is undoubtedly the ideal if carried to the ultimate democratic degree of universal military service. This, however, at the present juncture appears to be a political impossibility. Moreover, in fairness it must be admitted that there exists against universal service this perfectly cogent objection, viz., it would go far beyond our military needs in providing for us a military establishment. These considerations would seem to place universal military service or conscription outside the present field of practical statesmanship for the United States.

Let us now consider the only thing left, a volunteer army.

This may be considered under three heads: (A) The National Guard; (B) Our present regular army recruiting system; (C) The system which is presented later herein and which is described to some detail in an article which I contributed to *The Saturday Evening Post*, of March 4th, 1916, under the title "The Average American and the Army".

Consider these three volunteer systems in their order:

(A) While there is strong congressional support for the National Guard, both experience and military science force us to the opinion that it can never be made anything better than a fairly good second-line army, and that it can never be made anything better than a delusion and a snare as a first-line army or as a substitute for a regular army.

(B) The ability of the United States to secure volunteers

¹ Read by title at the meeting of the Academy of Political Science on May 18, 1916.

for the regular army under our present recruiting system is limited. Army service is attractive to a small number of men only, for reasons which are well known. The Hay bill, in its provisions for permanently increasing the regular army by recruiting, is in my opinion doomed to failure; but no more surely so than would have been the continental army plan proposed by Secretary Garrison. We therefore face a great national necessity, and a critical situation:

We must build up an army by the volunteer system: we have no system at present which enables us to get volunteers up to the number, say one million men, the minimum number of troops which, when one considers our military dangers, ought to be available at all times if the nation is to be safe against attack.

Therefore, the system of enlistment mentioned under (C) above is proposed. The following considerations justify the belief that this system is sound from a military viewpoint, as well as from a sociological standpoint, as a means of making the army more popular, and of rendering it a better understood and more beneficent force in our national life.

The proposal is that the army posts of the United States, and perhaps the Soldiers' Homes, now rapidly becoming useless for their original purposes, be converted as rapidly as may be into great army schools, in which young men from the ages of fifteen or sixteen to the age of thirty-five be permitted to enlist for educational purposes, their education being paid for by them, first, by service in the army and the taking of military training exactly as if they were soldiers in the regular army, as indeed they will be; and second, by remaining members of the reserve until disqualified by age or disability.

An analysis of this subject requires the consideration of three queries:

- 1st. Is the plan practicable from a military point of view?
- 2nd. Is it practicable educationally?
- 3rd. Will it give us an army of sufficient strength?

First. The statement may be made with perfect con-

fidence in its accuracy that the soldier's day, between the dates of September 1st and June 1st, may be so arranged as to give him three hours in the afternoon and two in the evening for study, without interfering with his military duties. This statement is made on the strength of assurances obtained from many regular army officers. The physical equipment is to be found in our army posts, where there is an ample supply of buildings well adapted for academic uses, and sufficient for the accommodation of several hundred thousand soldier-students if they are quartered in tents as, there is the best of reasons for thinking that they should be, with plenty of indoor accommodations during the day for study and recreation, under proper regulations.

Second. West Point experience proves the educational soundness of the plan. In that great institution, men are given a very excellent university education, and at the same time made perfectly proficient in the duties, not only of the common soldier, but also of the officer. The methods by which West Point cadets are chosen prevent their being in any high degree picked men, though they no doubt excel the average recruit in natural ability. But the requirements of their curriculum are very severe, while in the army school the course of study would be adapted to the average ability of the recruit. There is in West Point the tactical force of the institution which must necessarily be composed of military men separate from the academic faculty, and whose activities in the army system which is here proposed would be largely devoted to the drilling and training of the soldiers as soldiers. There is also at West Point the faculty of educational instructors, which in the army system here proposed would necessarily be composed of civilian teachers.

The average time which the college student gives to actual study does not amount, according to the best obtainable information, to more than one-third of the five hours which soldiers might be allowed without interfering with their military duties. The system, therefore, seems entirely and indisputably practicable from an educational point of view.

Third. Would it give an army of sufficient strength? This

can only be determined by trial. There is, however, no doubt that there is a great number of boys and young men up to the age of thirty-five, who are consciously suffering from present or past lack of educational opportunities. This is especially true of training along industrial lines; a need which consciously exists to a greater extent, probably, in states having educational systems supposedly superior to the average than in regions where the standards of literacy are low, and the educational needs therefore are not generally perceived. Sources from which troops could be drawn might be roughly scheduled as follows:

(a) Boys and men who live in regions unprovided with school facilities, and who are lacking in elementary education. The mountain regions and the Gulf states feel this need most keenly.

(b) Boys and men who have been forced out of school and into unskilled labor, by economic needs or lack of early appreciation of the necessity for training, and who now feel the awakened desire to add something to their present elementary knowledge.

(c) Boys and men who have, with fair educational equipment, engaged in mechanical, chemical, engineering or agricultural occupations, and feel the need of developing further training, that they may equip themselves for promotion and a higher type of work.

(d) Boys and men who wish to master special vocations of a mechanical, chemical, engineering or agricultural nature.

(e) Foreigners who wish to learn the English language, and who through such an army may become Americanized and finally landed upon farms on the public domain. The possibilities of such an army in relation to the use of the public domain are obvious on the mere mention of the subject.

(f) Negroes of the more ambitious sort, who desire the kind of education which some of them have been getting at the Tuskegee Institute under Booker Washington.

(g) Indians who make good soldiers and need industrial training and contact with boys and men of the ruling race that they may really acquire the white man's civilization.

(h) Boys who wish to prepare themselves for high school; this class being especially numerous in rural districts.

(i) Boys who lack preparation for college or for technical institutions, and who wish to give a year or more to study, that they may finish that preparation.

Such an army as this, operated with reference to the technical and vocational needs of the country, might be made, it seems to me, an agency for a constant increase in our national, industrial and intellectual efficiency; would be popular with the country; would furnish us all the men we need; would command congressional support because of the distribution of the now empty army posts; and should the Hay bill pass, would offer to the regular army an agency by which it could compete on the merits of the case with the National Guard, and if a regular army is as far superior to the Guard as it claimed, could overpass and outrun it in importance in a very few years. Such competition should benefit both the National Guard and the regular army.

In such an army plan the enlistment period should be for one year only, so that in its educational efficiency it would be placed in constant competition with life outside the army, and would therefore have to justify itself with the men from year to year.

These men should serve without pay; they would enlist from motives of patriotism strongly tinged with the desire for education. The educational facilities should be so excellent as to render them willing to serve without pay, or with nothing more than pocket money. A volunteer army to whom wages are to be paid at a rate high enough to tempt men from civilian occupations would cost more than is economically and politically possible. Unless such wages are paid, recruiting will fail. We must pay the men in the one thing for which young men are anxious to refrain from gainful occupations—education.

An amendment has been admitted into the pending army bill permitting enlisted men to take seventy-five hours of work in vocational training per month, if they desire, under civilian

instructors. While this provision may possess some value as recognizing a principle, there is reason to fear that it will fail of that success which its sponsors expect for it. This failure will come from the presence in the regularly-enlisted army of the professional soldier spirit, which, by reason of the admittedly inferior character of most of our army-post schools, and the antagonism in the breast of the common soldier toward "uplift work" in his behalf, will balk these well-meant efforts. The army plan proposed will place in segregated military units a very large number of men who will have gone into the army for the settled purpose of securing for themselves the advantages of training, who will be paid in education rather than in money, among whom there will be no exceptions in the matter of taking the training, and whose zeal for education will not be dampened by the cynical attitude of older soldiers, to whom the whole matter of study will be one of scoffing and ridicule.